

for renewed efforts to find a peaceful, just, and lasting settlement to the Cyprus problem. Such a resolution is consonant with American values of promoting stability, freedom, and democracy around the globe.

I strongly support a unified Cyprus. I am disappointed that the recent historic opportunity to resolve the Cyprus issue has failed, despite the hard work of United Nations Secretary Kofi Annan over the last several years, to bring the parties together and to facilitate an agreement.

I am disturbed that today, some 35,000 Turkish soldiers, armed with the latest weapons, are still stationed in the occupied area of Cyprus, making it, according to the United Nations Secretary-General, one of the most militarized regions in the world. At an estimated cost of \$300 million annually, Turkey continues to defy the international community and the U.N. resolutions with its policies towards Cyprus. Eighty-five thousand Turks have been brought over from Turkey to colonize the occupied area with the aim of changing the demography of the island and controlling the political situation. The Greek Cypriot community that remains enclaved within the occupied villages continues to live under conditions of oppression, harassment, and deprivation.

Mr. Speaker, the United States has a national interest in fostering peace and stability in the eastern Mediterranean region. We as a Nation cannot continue to pretend our NATO partner is not in clear violation of international law for its continued illegal occupation of its neighbor.

We in the United States pride ourselves for our respect for fundamental freedoms. Human rights norms are the cornerstone of U.S. foreign policy. It is time, Mr. Speaker, for Turkey to end its longstanding occupation of Cyprus.

Despite recent setbacks, I am still optimistic that the Cyprus situation can be peacefully and amicably resolved.

TRIBUTE TO DAVID PETER
THOMAS

HON. JON C. PORTER

OF NEVADA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Saturday, April 12, 2003

Mr. PORTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to offer my condolences for a dear family friend, David Peter Thomas. David passed away un-

expectedly on January 2, 2003, at the age of 28. I had the honor of knowing David and his family for many years. He was a devoted husband, son, brother, and grandson. Despite his young years, David had found a love of the law. He had attended UNLV School of Law for a year and then went on to the University of Utah, where he was in his last year of school. This past year David clerked at a local law firm, where he was to begin his career as a lawyer. David was also an avid skier and artist, which he inherited from his mother. He loved to spend his free time skiing, painting, or playing music. David was a beautiful person, a well-loved person who could brighten a stranger's day. His untimely death shall be regretted by all the people who knew David. To his family—his wife Natalie, his parents Peter and Nancy, his siblings Megan, Lindsey, and Adam, and his grandparents Monroe and Shirley, Parry and Peggy, I just want to say may he rest in peace. May God bless him.